

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to because Figure 11 is not designated by a legend such as --PRIOR ART--.

In response, a Submission of Corrected Sheet of the Drawings is being filed concurrently herewith in which the legend --PRIOR ART-- has been added to Figure 11.

No new matter has been added.

The drawings are also objected to because reference characters "105" and "106" are not mentioned in the disclosure. In response, the specification has been amended to address this ground of the objection.

It is respectfully submitted that both of the objections to the drawings have been overcome.

Title

The title has been objected to as not being descriptive. In response, a new title, which is more clearly indicative of the claimed invention, is presented herein for the Examiner's consideration and approval.

Abstract

The Abstract of the Disclosure is objected to because of the inclusion of so-called legal phraseology. In response, a new Abstract has been provided for the Examiner's consideration and approval.

Specification

The specification is objected to because of minor informalities noted by the Examiner. In response, the specification has been amended to attend to informalities, including those kindly identified by the Examiner. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added.

Claims Status

Claims 1, 3 through 6, and 10 through 14 are now pending in the application. Claims 2 and 7 through 9 have been canceled. Claims 1, 3, and 4 have been amended to even more succinctly define the invention and/or to improve their form. Claims 10 through 14 have been added to accord Applicants an additional scope of protection commensurate with the disclosure. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added. Claims 1 and 10 are the only independent claims pending in the application.

Allowable Subject Matter

It is acknowledged with appreciation that Claim 2 is merely objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Claim Objections

Claims 3 and 4 are objected to because of minor informalities kindly noted by the Examiner. In response, Claims 3 and 4 have been amended *inter alia* as suggested by the Examiner to overcome the objections. It is respectfully submitted that this objection has been overcome.

Art Rejections

Claims 1, 3, and 5 through 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,529,695 (Katayanagi, et al.).

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katayanagi, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,175,712 (Masuda, et al.).

The rationale underlying the foregoing art rejections is succinctly set forth in the Official Action.

Response to Art Rejections

The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Amended Claim 1 calls for an image forming apparatus that includes a first image bearing member for bearing a toner image; a second image bearing member for bearing the toner image; and a transfer member opposed to the first image bearing member with the second image bearing member therebetween. A voltage is applied to the transfer member to transfer the toner image from the first image bearing member onto the second image bearing member. A resistance R_t of the transfer member and a resistance R_b of the second image bearing member satisfy $R_t/R_b \geq 1.0$.

The invention defined in Claim 1 includes the feature that a resistance R_t of a transfer member and a resistance R_b of a second image bearing member satisfy $R_t/R_b \geq 1.0$. This claimed feature is effective to prevent disturbance in the formed images due to an abnormal electric discharge between the first image bearing member and the second image bearing member.

Katayanagi, et al. merely discloses preferable ranges of volume resistivities of a transfer roller and an intermediate transfer member. Specifically, Katayanagi, et al.

discloses that a volume resistivity of a semi-conductive elastic rubber of a primary transfer roller 6 is 10^5 to 10^8 Ohm.cm, and that a volume resistivity of an intermediate transfer member 15 is 10^6 to 10^{12} Ohm.cm.

Katayanagi, et al. does not disclose or suggest any relationship between the resistance of transfer roller and the resistance of an intermediate transfer member. *A fortiori* Katayanagi, et al. does not disclose or suggest that a ratio of a resistance R_t of a transfer member and resistance R_b of a second image bearing member is less than or equal to 1, ie., $R_t/R_b \leq 1$.

It is respectfully submitted that amended Claim 1 is allowable over Katayanagi, et al.

Masuda, et al. is merely cited for disclosing a salient feature recited in dependent Claim 4, which depends from Claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that Masuda, et al. does not overcome the above-noted deficiencies of Katayanagi, et al. *vis-à-vis* Claim 1.

Newly-presented independent Claim 10 has been formulated on the basis of Claims 1 and 2 and incorporates the allowable subject matter of Claim 2. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 10 also is allowable over the cited art.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1 and 10 are allowable over the cited art whether taken individually or in combination.

Dependent Claims

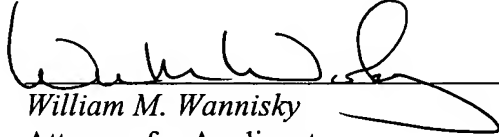
Claims 2 through 6 and 11 through 14 depend either directly or indirectly from one of Claims 1 and 10 and are allowable by virtue of their dependency and in their own right for further defining Applicants' invention. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Closing Comments

It is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are allowable over the art of record and that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application are earnestly solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our New York office at the address shown below.

Respectfully submitted,


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